

IV. Amendments to the Drawings

The attached sheet of drawings includes changes to Figures 1 – 3 and replaces prior sheet number 1/1 and adds new Figures 5 and 6 on new sheet 2/2.

Figure 1: Adds arrows to section line II – II.

Figure 2: Adds arrows to section lines III – III and IV – IV and adds an additional reference number 14.

Figure 3: Adds reference number 18 and attendant leader line and moves a reference number 14.

V. Remarks

Reconsideration and re-examination of this application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is herein respectfully requested.

After entering this amendment, claims 1,2, and 5 – 9 remain pending.

Drawing Objections – 37 CFR 1.83

The drawings were objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a) for failing to show every feature specified in the claims. Claims 4 and 10 have been canceled and Figures 5 and 6 have been added. Figures 5 and 6 show two gas generators as recited in claims 6, 7 and 8 and are further supported by at least paragraph [0014] of the specification. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted this rejection is now moot and should be withdrawn.

The drawings were also objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(b) for being incomplete on the grounds that it is unclear how the deflector of claim 1 is shaped. Applicant's have amended Figures 1 through 4 by providing additional reference numbers and their attendant leader lines to help clarify the geometry of the deflector. Furthermore, it is respectfully submitted that the deflector labeled at 14 as described in the specification is also shown in the drawings in compliance with 37 CFR 1.83. See MPEP § 608.02(d). Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted this objection is improper and should be withdrawn.

It is respectfully submitted that no new matter has been added with the above amendments.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite on the basis that the limitation “the narrow side” lacks sufficient antecedent basis. Claim 1 has been amended to delete the limitation “the narrow side” and replaces it with the limitation “the perimeter.” Accordingly, it is believed that this rejection is now moot and should be withdrawn.

Claim 2 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite on the basis that it is unclear where “the peripheral area” is located in the limitation “the peripheral area opposite the opening flap.” Claim 2 has been amended to delete the limitation “peripheral area opposite the opening flap” and replace it with “perimeter of the disk shaped gas generator in the area between the opening flap and the gas generator.” Accordingly, it is believed that this rejection is now moot and should be withdrawn.

Claims 9 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite on the basis that the limitation “disk-shaped generators” refers to a plurality of generators and therefore it is unclear how many generators are being claimed. Claim 10 has been canceled and claim 9 has been amended to delete the limitation “generators define” and replace it with the limitation “generator defines.” Accordingly, it is believed that this rejection is now moot and should be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 1, 2 and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,547,215, to Taguchi ("Taguchi"). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

As noted by the Examiner, *Taguchi* discloses an airbag system 50g having a plate 33 attached to a top surface of an inflator 3g. *See Taguchi* at col. 7, lines 27-43 and Fig. 13-14. The plate 33 is arranged offset from discharge openings of the inflator 3g and positioned within the airbag 2g and in no way surrounds the discharge openings. *Id.* at Fig. 14. In addition, a plane defined through holes (unlabeled) in the inflator 3g is arranged either approximately parallel, or at an angle substantially less than ninety degrees, to an airbag cover. *See id.* at Figs. 1-14. From this, it is submitted that *Taguchi* fails to disclose both a deflector that at least partially *surrounds* the gas-discharge openings and a gas generator arranged substantially perpendicular to the airbag cover. For at least these reasons, the rejection based thereon should be accordingly withdrawn.

Responsive to the rejection of claims 2 and 5, 10-12, 14 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being unpatentable over *Taguchi*, applicants submit *Taguchi* does not teach or suggest each and every element of each rejected claim. Moreover, claims 2 and 5 generally depend from claim 1. Thus, claims 2 and 5 are allowable for at least the reasons provided above.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1-5, 9 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Taguchi in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,702,318 to Rose ("Rose"). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

The arguments presented above are equally applicable to the present rejection. Furthermore, since an inflator 20 of *Rose* is arranged substantially *parallel* to a lid member 48, *Taguchi* individually and when combined with *Rose*, fails to disclose or suggest the features lacking in *Taguchi*, namely a gas generator arranged substantially *perpendicular* to the airbag cover. See *Rose*, at Figs. 1 – 3. In that *Rose* fails to disclose or suggest the gas generator arranged substantially perpendicular to the airbag cover, which was previously noted as being absent in *Taguchi*, it must be concluded that the combination of *Taguchi* in view of *Rose* cannot render the claims of the present application as obvious.

Furthermore, obviousness requires more than the mere fact that "references can be combined or modified", it requires some suggestion or motivation to combine. See MPEP § 2143.01 (III). Applicants respectfully submit that combining a collar 22 and flange 70 of *Rose*, see *Rose* at col. 6, lines 15-20 and Figs 2-4, with the inflator 3g of *Taguchi* as cited by the examiner, see *Taguchi* at col. 7, lines 27-43 and Fig. 13-14, would cause multiple changes in direction for the *entire* gas flow from the inflator 3g. Unlike *Taguchi*, this would result in significant pressure losses and restrictions to the flow of gas from the inflator 3d into the airbag 2d, impairing the airbag's ability to properly inflate and rendering it unsatisfactory for its intended purpose. See MPEP § 2143.01 (V). In addition, the proposed combination "would require a substantial reconstruction and redesign" of

the housing 4d "as well as a change in the basic principle under which the" inflator 3d is configured to inflate the airbag 2d to correct these deficiencies. See MPEP § 2143.01 (VI). As a result, there is no suggestion or motivation to combine *Taguchi* with *Rose*. See MPEP § 2143.01 (V - VI).

In that *Taguchi* at least lacks any suggestion or motivation to combine with *Rose*, and *Rose* also lacks a gas generator arranged substantially perpendicular to the airbag cover, it must be concluded that the combination of *Taguchi* in view of *Rose* cannot render the claims of the present application as obvious. The rejection under § 103 is therefore improper and should be withdrawn.

Responsive to the rejection of claims 2-5, 9 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Taguchi* in view of *Rose*, applicants submit the combination does not teach or suggest each and every element of each rejected claim. Moreover, claims 2-5, 9 and 10 generally depend from claim 1. Thus, claims 2-5, 9 and 10 are allowable for at least the reason provided above.

Responsive to the rejection of claims 6-8 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Taguchi* in view of *Rose* and/or in further view of U.S. Pat. No. 5,362,096 to Satoh ("Satoh"), applicants submit the combination does not teach or suggest each and every element of each rejected claim. Moreover, claims 6-8 generally depend from claim 1. Thus, claims 6-8 are allowable for at least the reason provided above.

Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present form of the claims are patentably distinguishable over the art of

record and that this application is now in condition for allowance. Such action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

7.13.06
Date


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Attachments: Three Sheets of Drawings

SLO/DPH/slk